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ABSTRACT

This collection of comments consists of four chapters of informal remarks by trustees, educators, and students from various types and sizes of institutions with innovative mainstreaming programs for handicapped students in postsecondary vocational education programs. Chapter 1 contains comments by nine individuals (students and administrators) on starting four college, community college, and junior college mainstreaming programs. These comments range from individual first impressions to general statements on the needs of the handicapped. Chapter 2 includes the thoughts of nineteen individuals who are connected with six postsecondary mainstreaming programs on program design. Seven individuals associated with three different programs describe job counseling and placement services provided by their respective programs in chapter 3. Eight individuals share their thoughts on effectively implementing mainstreaming programs despite limited funds. A brief annotated bibliography follows. (MN)

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TAKING ON TOMORROW

Innovative approaches
to post-secondary vocational education
for handicapped students.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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EDUCATION

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by Ned White

Boston, May 1980

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Introduction

When leaders of institutions consider strategies for change, they are likely to look for models in settings similar to their own. In fields too new to be fully documented, the personal experiences of others must serve as the best resource for guidance.

Postsecondary institutions are now affected by federal legislation requiring the provision of services for handicapped people in the "least restrictive environment." The question "Must we do this?" no longer applies. Trustees, administrators, and instructors now ask, "How can we do this? In what ways can our institution best assure equal opportunity and access for handicapped students?"

Since each educational institution is unique, there are no formula solutions or generally applicable models. Expertise in the field is too recent to have been treated comprehensively in print. It remains informal, conversational, and personal. And yet, common strategies to addressing common needs do exist--ideas and approaches that can be applied to any postsecondary institution on the threshold of developing a program for handicapped people.

In this book trustees, educators, and students in postsecondary schools whose mainstreaming programs represent positive steps share their ideas and experiences. You will find variety in program comprehensiveness, school size, support services offered for different disabilities, funding patterns, length of program history. But for all their differences, each institution presents spokespeople whose expertise, attitude, and beliefs offer insights that can be productively shared.

The four chapters in this book form a structure loosely parallel to the chronology of a developed mainstreaming program: "Getting Started," "Programs in Place," "Job Hunting," and "Looking Ahead." In each chapter, trustees, educators, and students speak for themselves in informal conversation. Recorded information mixes freely with more personal, anecdotal material. (A brief annotated bibliography at the end of this book is helpful to those wishing to pursue a detailed investigation.) This book collects material that is of human dimension: inspirations that have changed attitudes, ideas that have spawned strategies, actions that have shaped programs, and experiences that have changed the lives of teachers, administrators, and students alike.

Getting Started

Starting a mainstreaming program requires a certain way of thinking. In the words of Miami-Dade Community College trustee Maria Hernandez (see below), it is very "elegant" to have a "moral commitment." But what is needed, she and others attest, is a commitment that is "realistic."

To this end, administrators tend to agree that a successful start to any new program relies heavily on finding the right person to get it going. From this point, a program's building blocks tend to fit much more easily into place.

Miami-Dade Community College, North Campus, Miami, Florida

Miami-Dade, divided into four separate campuses each with its own administration, is the largest community college in the nation. Trustee Maria Hernandez draws a distinction between two kinds of commitments. For Associate Dean Wayne Silver, starting a program means finding a capable person to operate it and to create a system around identified needs.

Maria Hernandez, Trustee:

“ Trustees here have been morally committed to handicapped people for a long, long time. To this point we know that moral commitment is not enough. We need more than moral commitment to attack the handicapped problems and to give real impetus to our program. We need funding. We need people who are really interested in serving the handicapped. We feel that we are exceptionally lucky in

having people who are really dedicated to helping the handicapped. This is one thing that we have to be thankful for. We haven't been as lucky as we would like to be with funding. We realize that in our present financial situation, we don't have available as much funds as we would like to have to provide these services.

We do write grants, but it is difficult to track the sources of money at the federal level. We have been able, however, to get some of those funds channeled through to Miami-Dade Community College. Some very new programs have come up, not only for the handicapped but for the community as a whole.

I feel, in the end, that it is very elegant to have a moral commitment. For those we have committed to, it is not practical to have only a moral commitment. We have to be realistic. We have to see the whole for the parts, we have to see numbers, we have to provide service. This is not part of the moral commitment; this is part of the real commitment that we have to the handicapped. We like to be elegant, but we need to be realistic. ”

Wayne Silver, Associate Dean for Learning Support Services:

“ The spark plug for any new program is usually a top-notch coordinator, a forceful and skillful organizer. The next strategy would be to put together a broadly-based campus advisory committee for the handicapped, bringing together people who are concerned about the handicapped and who make decisions that affect the handicapped student. It is important that all the resources of the campus be brought together into a holistic system.

We have an ongoing series of efforts to sensitize various sectors of the campus. We've made a film dealing with sensitivity issues ("With a Little Help From Our Friends") that is shown everywhere on campus. We have also had the traditional kinds of awareness sessions. True, those are dramatic and they are short term. We treat them as such. We don't see them as panaceas. But we look at them as an introduction, a way to heighten sensitivity. ”

Gavilan Community College

Gilroy, California

Serving three agricultural towns in south Santa Clara County, Gavilan Community College is small, compact, rural. Its facilities are new, and therefore completely accessible to the physically disabled. The principal force behind the five-year-old mainstreaming program has been Carol Ghilarducci, Coordinator/Enabler of the program ("Enabler" is a term often used in California.) She has found strong support from an active board of trustees and from college president Rudy Melone. Himself temporarily disabled by blindness, Dr. Melone offers an energetic statement of rationale for the work Gavilan has been doing.

Rudy Melone, President:

“ By definition, a community college meets the needs of the community. And that community is not narrowly defined. We must respond to people who have different sets of needs. Look how capable community colleges, nationally, have shown themselves to be in responding to all kinds of needs.

Historically, we have tended to incarcerate people with disabilities. We hide them away in closets. Look what good things we are doing for them--we give them welfare and we keep them out of our sight; we don't want them to blemish our streets, our institutions. How short-sighted and smugly self-satisfying! Instead, we could spend a couple of thousand dollars cutting into that huge cost and have these people producing in our society. Most employers find that handicapped people are, in fact, terrifically capable people: persistent, hardworking, on time, eager, alert, and willing to do a lot of necessary work that needs to be done.

The goal of this institution is to serve. Our whole philosophy has been to make people self-sufficient to the extent possible. A major role of the community college is to make people proud and gainful wage earners. Given these goals, one community of people we are not serving as well as we should is the handicapped community.”

Ethel Goldsmith, Student:

“ In 1970 I was told that I would probably be in a wheelchair. I had back surgery and came home depressed and decided I was never going to go out of the house again. I decided after a while that I couldn't hack that either, that I had to get out. Getting out to me meant coming back to Gavilan. Fortunately, Gilroy and the south Santa Clara County area is very well-equipped for handicapped people. We have a bus with a lift on it. I really think that that is what got me involved to begin with. If you tell me I can't do something, I will do it to prove to you that I can.”

Carol Ghilarducci, Coordinator/Enabler:

“ The biggest fear is starting anything--the fear of what is going to be involved. When you just start wading in and get your boots wet, you say, "Oh gosh, standing in three feet of water isn't as bad as I thought it was going to be."

What we have accomplished in five years here isn't unusual. It seems unusual in a way, only because it keeps going. You keep thinking, okay, this year we're going to have a nice leveling year. This is going to be the year we sit back and do what we know works. Then something else will happen, or there will be an opportunity to expand.”

Florida Junior College,

North Campus, Jacksonville, Florida

A "Junior College" in name only, Florida Junior is structured similarly to Miami-Dade, with four separately-administered campuses. Head of the North campus, headquarters for the special needs program, Dr. Ezekiel Bryant agrees that a new program is best launched by single a single eloquent proponent, who can "sell" mainstreaming to an uninitiated community.

Ezekiel Bryant, Provost:

" In each community there are large numbers of handicapped people who have not approached their educational institutions because they have assumed that those institutions were not physically accessible, that perhaps the staff and faculty were not sensitized to be receptive to them, or that the equipment was not there to enable them to participate fully as students. As a result, most of them just did not "come out" and move into the mainstream of education. But now with (Section) 504, and with the changing attitudes, the institutions are beginning to move--and the handicapped are becoming more attentive to the opportunities here...

In trying to implement a program to enhance services for the handicapped, you need to have a person at the heart of it who has public relations capabilities. You need someone who can sell, influence, and persuade. Because you will face bias and barriers, you need someone who can get faculty to sit down and understand some of the sensitivities involved. Because you are in a college environment, you need someone who also has the credentials to command the respect of others, and who can operate on a peer level with the people with whom he or she has to coordinate. I think that persons who are handicapped certainly have an advantage in relating to the handicapped, but much of the problem-solving in this early stage is related to the non-handicapped community."

Santa Ana College

Santa Ana, California

Ethnically diverse, and semi-urban, Santa Ana College provides an impressive array of physical and human support services to its disabled population. A tripartite arrangement of programs addresses communications disorders, learning disabilities, and physical disabilities.

When Mary Majors, Enabler/Specialist for Disabled Students, arrived at Santa Ana to begin the program, the status of "expert" was conferred upon her; even though she "knew very little," expertise in this fast-growing human services field is relative.

For trustee John White and Santa Ana College President Bill Wenrich, support for mainstreaming was boosted dramatically by the college's first Awareness Day, in which nondisabled people temporarily experience a simulated handicapping situation.

Mary Majors, Enabler/Specialist, Disabled Students Program:

" When I got the job here, I was really scared because I knew nothing about setting up a program. I learned by doing everything wrong--by working from 7am to 8pm and going home and crying and saying, "I'm never going back." We did get a program going finally--by trial and error. Nobody on campus knew what was going on. I asked if I could have a consultant come in and work with me and they said, "You're the expert. We'll back you all you want, but you're the expert. " I really wasn't, of course, but as I look back on it now, I am really glad they made me do it. I had to do budget, equipment, and everything else.

I knew very little, actually. If a student had come in and told me, "I need a helicopter to take me to the airport," I would have said, "Okay, I'll see what I can do." I couldn't say no. It was very traumatic. If my old school had called me and said, "We

have a job opening, but of course, you have to work for free the first year," I would have said, "Fine, I'll come back."

Luckily, I stayed. 99

John White, Trustee:

“ We had no fears at all about starting a program. We weren't divided. A lot of enthusiasm for the idea was generated by our student newspaper, which we all are in the habit of reading. From the time I was first on the board there were many articles about the handicapped on campus and some of their accomplishments. Before we had any program, we had quite an active involvement of handicapped people in the athletic area in the weight room. They could participate in some physical exercise. Those in wheelchairs were able to do this and the athletes took it upon themselves to help them around. This attracted a lot of attention and the students were enthusiastic about this, which speeded our enthusiasm. It was a matter of making sure that they were accommodated in all the facilities thereafter.

We had our administrators in wheelchairs here one day and it attracted a lot of attention around campus. The idea was to give them an opportunity to feel for themselves what it's like to have to get to a rest room or to the upper floor classrooms, how to make your way across campus, or into the library. The student newspaper was really active in publicizing this sort of event. This helped to sell the program to the students. We have had nothing but good feedback from the student population.

Awareness Day was eye-opening. A lot of people said, "I see that there is a problem." Through that our program began. Not many community colleges had programs, so it was a feather in the president's cap to have one. That is one of the reasons we had administrative backing--it was a new program in a pioneering area and they knew a good thing when they saw it. 99

Bill Wenrich, President:

“ One of the best ways we found to foster understanding of the handicapped is to have a physically limited student day where trustees and administrators use wheelchairs--to experience a bathroom you can't get into or an elevator that is out of order. Or to put on blinders or earmuffs. That kind of empathetic experience sometimes helps to make people aware.

It also helps to have constituent groups, people who are handicapped themselves or who have handicapped people in their families, to present their cases. They can be quite vocal. They have had to scrap and fight for an awful lot of the things they have. They are certainly willing to come out and talk to boards and groups to present their case. And boards tend to be fairly responsive. 99

Programs in Place

Programs develop according to the existing needs of the community and the availability of resources to meet those needs. The common goal of any mainstreaming program: to integrate handicapped students into as many phases of school life as possible.

A program's design can vary considerably. Smaller institutions may charge the program's coordinator with a large measure of responsibility in developing program design. Larger schools may seek a broad-based collaborative effort in shaping a new program. In any event, a successful program "in place" ought to be flexible enough to respond to a changing handicapped population with changing needs.

SERVE

916 Vocational Technical Institute
St. Paul, Minnesota

SERVE (Special Education, Rehabilitation, Vocational Education) is the special needs center at "916", a vocational-technical school serving about 1300 postsecondary students with over 50 modularized programs and extensive facilities. As a mature and experienced program, SERVE operates effectively as a carefully organized system. It features a thoroughgoing vocational evaluation program, job counseling and placement, and several Supplemental Resource Instructors who act as counselors, aides, and expeditors for students.

Although it is elaborately structured, SERVE is flexible and able to adjust to changing conditions, as its staff members attest.

Josephine Reed-Taylor, Coordinator
of Special Needs:

" It is important that we are well-organized. I am really a systems person. It's important to spend time getting things set up in such a way that everybody knows what everybody is supposed to be doing. We work very cooperatively. We have our own departmental staff meeting once every two weeks, or in some areas, every week.

I also attend Board of Directors meetings that are held every two weeks, and the regular administrative meetings that I am a part of are held every Monday morning. We are involved continually in policy-making here at 916, allowing us to present the perspectives of different students who come in. These meetings offer us a chance to interact with other department directors so that we can keep one another informed. Because our students are mainstreamed, much of what happens at 916 has a direct effect on our students and the kinds of services we provide them. You can't coordinate everything with memos.

Organization like this is a blueprint for procedure. But it's changeable. And if we see that it's not working, we'll change it. "

Dennis Leshner, Senior Instructor,
SERVE Evaluation Center:

" Instructors have come to accept handicapped/disadvantaged students into their programs because they know there are support services available here to help them out, should they get to a point where they don't know what to do with a certain student. If students are having problems, we have Supplemental Resource Instructors and an evaluation program to which they can always return to be "recycled" into another program. Job-seeking is available, too, when they get to the point where they think they are employable.

Our vocational program tryouts here are designed to confirm a particular student's interest in a vocational training program, and to allow the student to spend some time finding out what it is all about. Tryouts also give the instructor a chance to look at the student to see if her or she has the potential for training.

At the end of the tryout, I get back to their referring agent, whether it is the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, or whatever, and have that counselor come out and meet with the program instructor, counselor, and student. We will then consider what types of services the student might need to complete the program. Maybe he can complete it without any help at all. Maybe he will need some reading or math help. Maybe he will need a Supplemental Resource Instructor to help him over some of the rough spots in the course.

We believe in giving the student opportunities to try out in a program that may be a little over his head, to permit him to find out for himself what is required in a particular program. The student has a right to fail, and we will give him that opportunity. Frequently, the tryout will surprise us. The student will do fine, even though he didn't make a very good impression on us down here in the evaluation. That's another reason for the tryout--to get that second opinion. If the instructor says he has potential for the program, that student is given a chance for another tryout in that program.

We've really come to depend on the vocational instructor. The instructor has adjusted himself to a lot of the special needs considerations. We have six instructors now who have taken sign language. Since they can do their own signing, their interpreter now can be used in another area. ”

Jim Fridgen, Supplemental Resource Instructor:

“ As Supplemental Resource Instructor, you have to be able to be flexible, to be on call. There was a student today who probably won't make it in driving. It is a difficult task for the instructor to say, "You're not going to pass the test," but the instructor has no control over the test. In a vocational setting, a student feels that if a program isn't right for him he will fail. When I went to college, I decided I didn't want to be an accounting major anymore and

nobody really knew. The computer saw the change, but it was the only one who really knew. Here, you're in a program with about 15 or 20 students. If you're not making it here, everybody knows. That's why it's important to do the interest test and the evaluation trial so that students have the opportunity to stay in school and find a program that's suitable.

The biggest untapped potential here at 916 is what we call "partials." A student enters a program and goes through, say, half of it until he becomes extremely competent at certain skills. I think we should do a lot more for "partials." There are jobs available that students can do on certain levels, even if they can't complete the whole program.

In the transportation area, for instance, the required reading level is probably three times as high as you would need to survive in the occupation. Instructors tend to look at what they want out of the perfect auto mechanics student. They want every student to be able to reach that level of achievement. Yet there are a number of positions available in the auto mechanics industry that don't require such skill. He may never be the mechanic who can do everything, but he can be dependable doing certain tasks. ”

Miami-Dade Community College

North Campus, Miami, Florida

At a large campus like Miami-Dade, problems of awareness and communication can be more obvious than at smaller schools, and disabled students are more likely to be overwhelmed by the sheer volume of "normalcy" that surrounds them. Colleen Fix, coordinator of the program at Miami-Dade until the fall of 1979 (she is now Deputy Director of the Florida State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in Tallahassee) explains the advantages of helping students by her own example as a blind person, and describes ways to mollify instructors who are having difficulty adjusting to mainstreaming.

Because of Miami-Dade's many departments and large student population, raising awareness about mainstreaming was an undertaking that called for an innovative approach. When the program was young, the college produced a half-hour film entitled "With A Little Help From Our Friends" dramatizing some of the problems when nondisabled and disabled persons first meet. The film has been shown campus-wide to all college instructors and many students.

Colleen Fix, Coordinator,
Services for/ by Physically Limited:

"This campus can be pretty intimidating to the handicapped student who's just come out of the 'closet.' As a professional, I was scared to death the first day I came to Miami-Dade. One of the big advantages I've had is that I can say to the student, 'I, too, am handicapped. I am legally blind. And I also have been in a wheelchair. I know where you're coming from. It's a really difficult step. Why don't you come and talk with me and see how you feel about it.'"

In talking with students, I tell them it is their responsibility to talk to the instructor and explain the problem, that this is what I need from you to help me solve my problem. The student doesn't ask, "Do you want me in your classroom or don't you?" Instead, the student says, "I am legally blind. My experience has been such and such. I did graphic arts in high school. These are some things I feel I had problems with. I'm working with Mrs. Fix." There is always that backup, "I'm working with Mrs. Fix," and the instructor is always encouraged. Whatever the problem, instructors are not hanging out there by themselves. I won't tell them that I know all the answers, but we do sit down and think things out. What are we going to do about this and how are we going to handle it? We brainstorm.

Instructors have been receptive, but problems can arise. You may encounter some instructors who will not react positively. I remember one, at another school, who called up screaming, "Get

this person out of my class!" I replied, "I'm really busy now, but if you'll give me a couple of days, I'll try to get him into a different class. I'll try to work something out." Nine times out of ten, that person will have calmed down and will be able to begin dealing with the disabled student. That is one way of handling that situation--give the instructor time to adjust.

When you're working in a pioneer field, you find yourself relying in large part on ingenuity, on sticking your neck out. For instance, you'll find that a good relationship between the college and Voc Rehab is really important. It's being able to pick up the phone and say, "Hey Joe, I have this guy and he's got this problem, and I need your help. Can you bend every rule in the book to help this good kid out?" That's what characterizes a good relationship. Now maybe this counselor will say, "Listen, I'd love to help you, but this stinky boss of mine says he absolutely won't, and it's against policy." At that point, you need to be able to get to that person's boss, and then get your boss, the dean, or the president, to meet so that those policies can change. This has happened. Policies do change.

I was able to initiate three courses in sign language for the deaf for credit. As a result, I hired student assistants who could sign, and we had peer tutors who could sign to be part of our ongoing program. That was what happened. It was not just a wonderful idea. It was a matter of survival.

We have four student assistants now who sign. We had only two certified interpreters in Dade County about three or four years ago. But now we have many people now who can communicate with the deaf, and the community at large is showing much more interest in signing. "

Leah Howard, English Instructor:

Leah Howard, who is blind, teaches English. She also tutors blind students in using the Opticon, a device that scans printed letters, reproducing them as electrical impulses, the shapes of which students "read" with their fingertips.

“ One of the things that makes Miami-Dade special is our faculty--not just for handicapped students, but for all of our students. We all spend many hours here and make ourselves available to the students. When I went through college, there was nobody I could go to. Oh, my teachers were very nice, but they didn't make it readily apparent that they were available for after-class talks or counseling. We do.

I have three classes of regular students. All my students know that I get here in the morning around eight or a little after, and I'm here until four. They know they can come to me. They know that, if there is a way that I can help them, I am going to do it. And I don't think I'm alone in this. I think that the majority of the faculty is just like me. ”

Santa Ana College

Santa Ana, California

Richard Rossman, who has cerebral palsy, and his wife Jo, a hemiplegic, purposefully sheltered themselves from the world until they arrived at Santa Ana College, where they have found new direction. As Enabler/Specialist Mary Majors and her assistant Jan Sherman explain, our society is not ready to make too many concessions to disabled persons. They note, instead, that it is primarily the disabled person's responsibility to make the necessary adjustments.

Santa Ana has been quite successful involving handicapped students in adaptive physical education. Instructor George Curtis, who displays an instinctive grasp of student needs, describes situations where students achieved dramatic levels of success.

Richard Rossman, Student:

“ My disability is two-pronged... cerebral palsy with a touch of Parkinson's disease. I was so-called "normal" until I was 14 years old, and then this thing materialized. I was very mad at

the world and mad at myself. I didn't want part or parcel of anything or anybody. I withdrew from everything. This was when I was in the 8th or 9th grade. I was in a stagnant state for roughly 10-15 years.

Then I met his wonderful person-- Mary Majors. She talked to me and got me to come to college. I had a firm belief at the time that I was not college material, but through Mary, I made it as far as I have now. I have one AA degree, and I am working on another. ”

Jo Rossman, Student:

“ I had problems dealing with everyday life, so I was sent to a mental health institution. It was group therapy all the time. I figured, I don't belong here; I'm not crazy. But I was there because they didn't know where else to put me. One of the doctors there pushed and pushed and made me see that I could go back and get a high school diploma. Then he sent me over to Mary (Majors) and Mary made me see that I am not a waste, that I am a human. Just seeing other handicapped people, like Rich, helped a lot. Before, I felt as if I was the only handicapped person in the world. I was young, and I was always in these hospital wards full of old people. A lot of them were very depressed and that rubbed off on me. ”

Jan Sherman, Assistant to Mary Majors:

“ It is important for disabled students to start out on the right foot. We must let them know what they have to offer and what kinds of program we have. They must learn where they can go with what they have to offer. They should know what is going to benefit them in the final outcome, and what they are going to have in their pocket when they leave.

When a student is having an attitude problem, I try to help. I'll usually be straightforward with them. "Don't you think you are being a little ridiculous? What is your purpose here if everything is so bad? Why are you coming

if school is such a negative experience for you? Go home and watch TV. This place isn't for you, I guess." They think about these things for awhile. Sometimes it doesn't work, but a lot of times positive things do happen. It's interesting. People in chairs are like anybody else. You have "bad ones" and "good ones." With me being in a chair, if they have negative vibes about getting a job, I can at least say, "Well, I'm here. I'm in a chair and I've got a job. I work eight hours a day, forty hours a week. I can do it. I have a home and a husband. I can take care of everything. You can, too. "

Mary Majors, Enabler/Specialist,
Disabled Students Program:

" For the disabled students who come to me with the decision to enroll here, I try to figure out what their interests are, what their aptitudes are in certain areas, and then I try to steer them to these areas. Many of them have absolutely no idea of what they want to do. Or they have been helped, say by a speech correction therapist, and that is the kind of work they feel they want to do, even though their speech may be very poor. You can tell them all you want that they won't be able to do it. What has worked best has been just to let them go into something, and see. I hate for them to fail, but many of them have to do that to see what is required.

We do have a lot of introductory classes: Introduction to Business, Introduction to Computers, Introduction to Real Estate, and so forth. These courses give students the opportunity to look into an area to see if they want to try it. Most of them are very good--a quick look at what is available and what you can do in that area. We also have a career education center where the students can acquire information.

Most of it, though, is trial and error for many of my students. First of all, most of them had no idea they would ever return to school. Secondly, they had no idea that they would ever work again. Thirdly, they've never been allowed to see what their strong points are...

Our deaf program got going almost accidentally, because we had two students who came over from another college where they were not allowed in the machine shop class. The machine shop teacher there just did not want hearing-impaired students in class. We didn't have a program for the hearing-impaired here at the time, but I took any and all comers in here. We enrolled them in the class with no interpreter. One of the students was totally deaf. Another, who could hear a little, decided he was going to act as a kind of interpreter. Well, the instructor came over and said, "I really like having these students in my class, and they're doing well, but their vocabulary is so poor that they don't understand basic machine shop terms." So we got them into a reading program. We have a reading clinic here where you go in, take a reading test, and whatever level you achieve on the test, that's where you start your reading program. It didn't work very well because there was still a hearing problem. So the instructor worked with our speech therapist in getting someone to help in class.

Our drafting instructor, one day, called down here on his own and asked if it was possible to get a couple of adjustable drafting tables, because he had a student in a wheelchair. He wanted to be sure, before he got more students, that he would be able to accommodate them without inconveniencing or discouraging them from the very beginning.

We just had one instructor come in here who told us how he put his foot down with a disabled student. In the past, during exams, he had given points to this disabled student that he would not have given to an able-bodied student. Well, this student did not show up for an exam, but arrived later in the afternoon to ask for a make-up. The instructor told him that there would be no make-ups for missed exams. The student was not allowed to take a make-up.

The only negative thing that has happened was in a Spanish class. I put a blind student in an "old-timer's" class. He told me he couldn't have this student in his class because he couldn't read the accents. I was very upset. This was my first confrontation with an

instructor. But the student dropped out of the class, then went back and stayed in it without credit. He had all of the books done in Braille. The next semester he took the class for credit and received A's. He was a very intelligent student to begin with. And I never had any more trouble with that instructor. He had to be shown; he was an old school type of teacher and he just had to be shown. "

Arlen Pirtle, Auto Body Instructor:

" After the first ten minutes or so of the lecture, a deaf student like Juan will just become part of the class. The interpreter is a novelty for a little while, but soon the students just accept his being there. The funny thing is, a lot of the students are trying to learn the deaf language. They are very helpful. Learning sign is like learning another language...

Recently a group had to do a paint job and had to figure out how to keep the paint from getting inside the car, or in the wrong areas. The other boys explain all this to Juan. If he puts his hands showing that he doesn't understand, they draw illustrations for him...Juan has been here since September. He worked in automotive finishing in Mexico before coming to the U.S. Apparently, as a kid, he hung around shops and they let him sand cars and do a lot of general flunkie duties. They would have him do things, but they would never explain why, or what the techniques were for doing them. They would expect him to observe and mimic. But he's an inquisitive student and he wants to know how things work...Here at Santa Ana, he has worked hard. He is very proud of his car. He puts on the last coat of paint to give him the kind of pride that says, "I did this." He will be successful in the field, there is no doubt about that. "

George Curtis, Adaptive Physical Education Instructor:

" I don't see great success with every single person. But at least students have better self-esteem. We develop a very close one-to-one relationship with our students. We call each other by first names. In my world, there is a lot of teasing, digging, goofing-off back and forth. That's my personality. We have one student named Mike who is in a wheelchair with spinal problems. Many times we brought him into the class and he was really very quiet. So every time we took him from one place to another, I'd say, "Come on, Mike I aint' got all day." Here we are, pushing the wheelchair and saying, "Come on, Mike." We got Mike to look over his shoulder from one of his stations and say, "Well, I haven't got all day. If you guys don't get over here, I'm going to leave." It's a good atmosphere for me to work in. I can't feel sorry for these kids. They're so much better off than I am in some areas. They have a good outlook on life, they are positive, they know where they're headed.

We have some students who need the aquatic program very badly, but they don't know how to swim. We put them in a life jacket and walk around and hold their heads above water or have them go on their backs. The water pressure seems to help the lower back. It also stimulates circulation--the movement of water is like a massage. They don't have to be strong to do many of the exercises. They just have to be able to move their limbs.

We had a man of about 40 who had no control of his limbs or speech. It was very frustrating because there was no way I could teach him to swim. He was having a lot of trouble sleeping, and other things too. We got him out in an inner tube and we told him just to thrash. Just get tired, break sweat... He had a lot of fun kicking and moving around. He could use one finger to type and wrote me a little pecked out note once early in the semester. "Thank you very much. I am sleeping better now. I feel better, and it's great to get out of the wheelchair for an hour a day."

In athletics, as in other things, if you *think you can*, that's half the battle. That is the same attitude I take with the adaptive P.E. students. I get them to believe that they can. I had a student here, Karen, who was just tiny and very fragile. It was frustrating to me because I deal with all these athletes who are bench pressing 400 to 500 pounds. I didn't have a weight in the whole department that she could lift. I went out and bought some fishing weights--1 ounce, 2 ounces--and tied them to a string so she could exercise. The last time I saw her, she was bent over, doing minute drawings and designs. She is a fantastic painter. The added strength she had from her weight-training enabled her to hold a brush. It really helped out.

If you come out of surgery from an accident, the first thing you say is, "Why me? Why couldn't it have been somebody else?" When they come down here to adaptive P.E., often they are used to being dependent. We try to correct that way of thinking. If they want to get better, they're going to have to be responsible for themselves. I'll tell them that I'll help them. I'll tell them the first day, "Here's the program, here are the opportunities for you to do it. Now it's up to you to get here, for you to do it at home, plus what you do here. Whatever we outline, it's up to you. If you don't meet those goals, you might as well drop the class." We wake them up. This is not Mommy and Daddy wiping your nose all the time. If you want it, it's yours, but you're the one who has to go out and get it. That is the line we tell our athletes: hey, the game is yours. You set your own goals, and the only limitation is yourself.

We had another girl who had a birth defect with her hips the way the socket fits into the hips. She had a number of different surgeries. She also developed a number of growths on her legs. The only way she could walk was with canes. Her joints were very stiff, but she could swim moderately well. She took my class one semester and we set goals. Her goal was to be able to swim the

width of the pool back and forth without stopping. She was able to swim it 15 or 20 times by the end of the semester.

The second semester she wanted to try some aquatic movements and go off the diving board. I helped her to the end of the diving board, and she would lean forward and dive in. Finally, she wanted to go off the high dive. I don't even like going off the high dive. We had about 15 or 20 kids in the class, and they all said, "Come on, Mr. Curtis!" I helped her up to the top one day by staying behind her. The only trouble she had was getting out the last six feet of the diving board, and there she went! She was going to do it again. We had a whole caravan of students in wheelchairs from all over campus who came to watch.

After her third semester I asked her what she wanted to do, now that she could dive from 12 feet and pick up an 8 pound brick from the bottom of the pool. So I suggested snorkeling. She took it up, and she was just like a fish. She opened up a whole new world for herself.

I think, in past years, that physical education departments looked at the handicapped student as a detriment. They've felt guilty, I think, because they haven't had the facilities or the instructors to help them, to meet their needs. Sometimes, when you have 40 kids who are healthy and one who is not, you feel your first responsibility should be to the majority. Handicapped kids were always shoved aside. Now we recognize the individual's needs. We will help him. The success we have found in helping the disabled student is priceless. "

Springfield Technical Community College

Springfield, Massachusetts

At Springfield Technical Community College, which now mainstreams about one hundred handicapped students, Dorothy Pryor was in charge of Services for Students with Special Needs until 1979, when she returned to teaching English full time. She notes that as we learn more about different handicaps, we will have to exercise greater responsiveness to the largest special needs population--those who are learning disabled.

Dorothy Pryor, Former Coordinator:

" We may not have oppressed handicapped people, but we've ignored them. What we've been guilty of--as a country, as groups, and as individuals,--is oppression by omission rather than by commission. Look at our architecture: building with these magnificently symmetrical flights of stairs, all of which represent insurmountable barriers to many who are handicapped. Consider a teacher's habits in the classroom: turning his back on the class and putting problems on the board, explaining them as he goes along. This completely leaves out the hearing impaired.

If there is a given physiological requirement germane to the performance of the profession or the job for which students are being trained, then you can't expect people to do away with that particular requirement in a school setting. When some hope was raised for handicapped people, it was natural that some hopes would be raised almost unrealistically. On the other side of the coin, it's amazing what some disabled students can accomplish with just a little help, or a little modification of facilities and equipment. Most things can be modified with just a little ingenuity, just a little patience.

Colleges like ours are very soon going to have to deal with the problem of learning disabilities. Already there have been inquiries from area school principals about what we do about learning disabilities at the community college level. We haven't been able to tell them much--we don't even have diagnostic tools yet. Even with a good diagnosis, then what? While we've been reassuring the public that we have meant what we've said about helping people with disabilities, this is an area where we should consider leveling with the public, in a sobering kind of way, that maybe we cannot do everything for everybody. We can only go as far as our skills and training allow us to go. Now, as we learn more, and as more opportunities become available for training and for research, perhaps there may come a time when we can take a learning disabled adult and do what has to be done. But we're having troubles right now. We have our hands full.

In the meantime, we have enough problems now with people who are functionally illiterate, who have reading and writing difficulties, who have to take remedial courses. In fact, we do as much remedial work here as we do regular college teaching. "

Gavilan Community College

Gilroy, California

Gavilan student Ethel Goldsmith, confined to a wheelchair in recent years, has been active in both student government and community groups (as has Gavilan's other wheelchaired student, Herb Fenske). Her efforts on behalf of physically disabled students have been instrumental in effecting change on campus on off.

The college's small size makes organizational flexibility easy. The program for disabled students is free-wheeling and high-spirited, readily adaptable to the students' changing needs. Coordinator/Enabler Carol Ghilarducci explains that this atmosphere of high energy should not be mistaken for disorganization.

Ethel Goldsmith, Student:

" It was scary to come back on campus, to go into a room where everybody else was walking. I had to make myself do it. You stick out like a sore thumb.

Some of the teachers had trouble accepting us when we first came on campus because they weren't able to treat us as ordinary people. My pet slogan would be, "See me, not the wheelchair." A few instructors were seeing the wheelchair. The wheelchair was throwing them emotionally.

Carol Ghilarducci has always been the type of person whom any of us can go and talk to. Carol worked all year long to get the administration to put up a bus shelter for us. She wasn't getting any response, so I asked her if I could help. I sent a mailgram to _____ saying, "Rainy weather is coming and wheelchair people have no place to go. We'll get wet, and if we get wet, we'll catch a cold. If we catch a cold, we can't come to school. And there goes your ADA [Average Daily Attendance]. You get paid by the state according to attendance. So if we're sick, you lose money. "

Carol Ghilarducci, Coordinator/Enabler:

" The staff is not afraid to work hard. They are not concerned about looking at the clock. Sometimes we are going bonkers with objectives due and talking with students and pushing to get people jobs or dealing with student behavior problems. It can be frantic here.

That quality sometimes can be mistaken for disorganization, or not really having a handle on the program. But I believe it probably indicates just the opposite, that the program is going well. Walking into our classrooms sometimes, visitors look as if they're thinking, "My God, this doesn't appear very well organized." Thank God it doesn't. If it were really organized and students were sitting in neat little rows, you wouldn't have an educational process going on. We expect a lot from our students, and we get what we expect.

A good example is getting Herbie [Fenske] the job at the switchboard. There was a lot of resistance to that, not through any kind of malice or prejudice, but through a lack of understanding. "Herbie can't work on a switchboard; he can't use his hands." "Well, yeah, but he is going to have to take messages and everything." "Okay, but how is he going to balance the telephone on his shoulder?" "Well yeah, but is his wheelchair going to fit over there?" And so on. Well, Herbie's as good a switchboard operator now as anyone else."

Jeff Syren, Student:

Until Jeff Syren came to Gavilan, he had been diagnosed as mentally retarded. After Carol Ghilarducci informed him that tests indicated him to be of normal intelligence, Jeff began to expose himself to greater challenges.

" Last year, I said, "Why me?" The answer was slow in coming. It got so bad that I seriously contemplated suicide, something I had never really thought of before. Never. I can't remember when I didn't want a strychnine tablet to get out of this life. My friends noticed what state I was in because I wasn't shy about it. I said, I want out of this life. One of my best friends actually got so mad that she was about to straighten me out with the time-honored fist in the mouth. She saw what type of person I was, what possibilities there were. She said, "I am not about to let you kill yourself, so knock that one out of your head." As I said, the answer from heaven was slow. I never thought it would come. When it came, I thought, "Thank the Lord this period is over. And I am not going to let it happen again. I flat out refuse."

I figure if people go through life smoothly, without any doubt or any type of death-wish, then they have lived life too easily and too comfortably to realize there are struggles. There will be times when you have to go down and no one is going to stop you. After Carol Ghilarducci told me what my IQ was, I thought, hmmm, it isn't high enough. I expected one higher. Then I thought,

hey, wait a minute. I've heard 100 is the average IQ, and you are two points above it. Pretty good, Jeff! Try to make it go even higher if you have to, rack your brains, take classes that force you to think. Don't take these nice, la-de-da easy classes. "

Noni Walker, Developmental Disabilities Instructor:

" I have heard people talking at conferences who are almost afraid to start developmental disabilities programs at their schools. I have heard people say that, unless we start getting a lot of flak, a lot of pressure from parent groups, we're not going to start one. Probably because it takes a lot of work, it's an all-day job.

Because students are developmentally disabled does not mean they are mentally ill. Some may be, but the two don't always go together. So I don't feel that all developmentally disabled people should be in institutions. You know, if you grow up and live in an institution, it's going to affect you. But if you are out in the real world living with real people, and are taught or given the opportunity to learn more appropriate behavior, you're going to be entirely different. Most of our developmentally disabled students are involved in vocational programs within the school. We have a "pseudo-workshop." Most of the vocational training occurs there so that they learn about the atmosphere of a workshop. The idea is, of course, that at some time you have to go to work, and the workshop helps you prepare for it. When we tried to do it in the classroom, it didn't succeed. One hour you are dancing, and the next hour you are in a workshop. It's hard for students to make that change and say, okay, we're through with dancing and now we're working. So we started the workshop and it's really been good.

At the workshop, they learn skills while they are putting these products together. It's training. They know that this is only training, and they know when they go to the real workshop downtown, they'll get paid for it.

Most of them look forward to it. Many of the students, we feel, are at a level where they may be able to go into competitive employment in the community.

Handicapped students here have grown. They are in a setting where they have "normal people" models. Before, when they were in institutions and special education schools, the only models they had were other handicapped students. Here, they are given the opportunity to emulate other students. The normal population is exposed to them and whatever fears they had disappear. They find out that handicapped people are people--much more like them than unlike them. It is just incredible. "

Dave Ellis, Adaptive Physical Education Instructor:

" I'll say, "Let's start exercising now," and many of my students become very fearful. You know, I'm not going to say, "Hey, I can get you out of that wheelchair. I'll make you walk!" Baloney! It just isn't going to happen. But if people get a sense of security, and fun and joy, they're going to perform. There are some people I could never get down here to do some things. I think we have to remember that when you go through all your life being seen as different and being protected, you're going to find it difficult to come on down here to the swimming pool, or the gym, and take a chance. But we do everything we can to make it all, in some way, accessible to handicapped people to do normal things. Swimming and water exercises. The water itself is universal, being adaptive to exercise for all people. Lifting 200 pounds may not be too hard for you or me, but doing ten arm rotations under water, with the resistance of the water, can be a heck of a workout for a disabled person. "

Rudy Melone, President:

President Rudy Melone, who for several months experienced temporary loss of vision, believes that the best kind of help we can offer the handicapped person is that which encourages a break from dependency."

“ Handicapped people deserve the kinds of things that everyone else has access to. But they don't have my blind commitment. They are subject to evaluation just like anybody else. When I see a teacher behaving in a way that I think is strange, saying something like, "Now look, Billy, you have to sit here right now and do this," I understand why the teacher is talking that way. That shows a certain kindness, a necessary firmness.

Most people have had some kind of an interim handicap of some kind or other during their lives, a malfunction. Colleagues of mine who are presidents have had leg problems, hip surgery. I have friends who have played tennis and now have Achilles tendon tears. Colleagues of mine have had heart attacks. Somebody has to rap for attention at that moment and say, "Hey, take those feelings you are feeling for the moment, all that misery and discomfort, and translate it into how these people must feel." It doesn't take much. Be attentive for a moment. Be aware. Have some empathy for someone who is ungainly and unable to move properly. Understand not only the pain, but the awkwardness of trying to function. ”

Florida State Junior College

Jacksonville, Florida

Once instructors have become sensitive to the needs of disabled students, according to Florida Junior College's Coordinator Brenda Hice Mason, they need continued practical guidance to deal with challenging day-to-day situations. And she explains that students don't need comprehensive training in a field to develop the kinds of skills that will make them employable.

Brenda Hice Mason, Project Coordinator:

“ Our instructors are very effective. They want to help. They've identified handicapped students for me this year, and have asked me for services for these students...But there are many faculty members who have not been trained to know how much modification is required to accommodate handicapped students. Many teachers in the classroom are frightened. So we are doing some training for our faculty in a couple of months...And we'll do a follow-up afterwards. This is really going to be helpful to them. For the first time here, faculty members will be learning some actual "what-to-do" and "how-to-do-it"'s. Modification, planning their time--things they have not been told about.

Especially important is that we encourage instructors to be flexible. When I first came here there was a student in autobody mechanics with cerebral palsy. The only thing in life he wanted to do was to be a finisher. He did not want to be anything else that might be taught in the course. There were problems with this. At first, the instructor felt he could not go through the whole course because of dexterity problems. He was not a very steady person on his feet. The instructor felt he might hurt himself, or hurt someone else. The instructor was concerned that he could not place this student in a job once he graduated, simply because he could not do what an able-bodied person could do. He kept missing the point that the student only wanted to finish cars. After some time, the instructor was able to understand that the student could skip a lot of other automotive things and be trained as a finisher. ”

Job Hunting

As the employment market offers more opportunities to handicapped people, postsecondary institutions are expanding their job counseling and placement services. Evidence shows that a person's disability need not interfere with job performance. In fact, the handicapped worker has a better attendance record, shows greater productivity, and is less likely to be an accident victim than the nondisabled employee.

Attitudes in private industry have shown continual improvement. SERVE administrator Josephine Reed-Taylor points out, for instance, that St. Paul area employers are coming to her to ask how their companies could better accommodate handicapped workers.

SERVE

916 Vo-Tech Institute
St. Paul, Minnesota

As Job Seeking/Job Keeping Instructor with SERVE, Pat Berres considers it his primary task "to provide individuals with the tools and skills that will make them independent." After students have worked with him, they consult with Placement and Employment Counselor Jim Whittington, whose state-funded office provides all 916 students with career information and lists of job openings supplied by employers.

Pat Berres, Job Seeking/
Job Keeping Instructor:

" What we have found with handicapped students leaving here, and I am sure this is true of national surveys, is that people who are handicapped don't have as much difficulty in retaining a job, once they get it, as non-handicapped people do. They go through such pains to get a job that they're not

going to take it lightly. Non-handicapped people have an easier time of getting a job in the first place, but they tend to lose jobs more frequently.

Ten years ago maybe some of the handicapped people who are working now would have been on public assistance. It makes sense, economically, to offer handicapped individuals equipment, skills and tools needed to compete for employment. Otherwise, they'd be back on public assistance or in a sheltered workshop somewhere. Take a new look at who, in the past, would have automatically been ticketed for a sheltered workshop situation. Now, finally, we can say maybe there is more in store for them. Our basic approach is to provide individuals with the tools and skills that will make them independent. Some people, I suppose, would criticize this approach for the time, effort, and money that we put into it. Far easier for an instructor just to call up an employer and say, "I've got this student trained in such and such an occupation." But then we have to ask ourselves, what is the student going to do about finding another job later on? So that's our underlying principle here: to make every student who leaves here independent in all those skills necessary to find employment. "

"Since your options are limited right from the start," says recent SERVE graduate Wayne Martinek, "you have to try for the best." Confined to a wheelchair with cerebral palsy, Wayne encountered considerable difficulty in finding a job as a computer programmer before getting a position with the State of Minnesota in St. Paul.

Jim Whittington, Placement and
Employment Counselor:

" We sent Wayne to quite a variety of interviews. We sent him to investigate private sector jobs, state jobs, county jobs, just about every kind of situation we had available. As a placement office for the entire school, we regarded Wayne as just one of the individuals we were working with. We don't stress handicap. When they come in the door, they're treated like everybody else...

Wayne's field was programming. He wanted nothing less than to be a qualified programmer. That was his training, and he felt he should get nothing less ...He can handle the work. Granted, he might not be able to do the work that a non-handicapped individual would be doing in the same position. He could not operate at the same speed, simply because his problem is a kind of motor control problem. And he may take a little extra time to punch ten buttons on a terminal, but he can still punch those ten buttons on a terminal. My position is that I would rather help him to handle his problem than to handle his problem for him. I guess that's what mainstreaming is all about. ”

Pat Berres, Job Seeking/
Job Keeping Instructor:

“ I worked with Wayne for about six or seven months. The instructor of the data processing program made the referral knowing that Wayne would need some help in understanding the law about non-discrimination against the handicapped. She wanted him to have some information like that and also to have some assertiveness training, feeling he would need that if faced with discrimination later on. So we started working. Wayne did not then anticipate any employer rejection. It was difficult then to get him to accept the likelihood that this might occur so we worked on the development of a resumé. It is really an involved process. I encourage students to write down their assets; when they see them on paper, they can sit back and say, "These are really something!" If they go into an interview with a positive attitude like that their chances are increased. Wayne mailed his resume out to about 25 employers--some just on a "cold contact", where he knew they were hiring data processing people, and some in response to newspaper ads. Well, he got back 25 rejection letters with pretty much the same language...

Wayne never felt that an employer would reject him on the basis of his being in a wheelchair. Once he responded to an ad in the newspaper, sent his resumé out (which said he was in a

wheelchair), and got an application back in the mail. After returning it to the employer, he received a letter saying that he did not fit the qualifications they were looking for. About two weeks later, one of the other students here at 916 was interviewed by that company and was hired. Wayne found out about it, and I asked him what he was going to do. Well, he called the employer, essentially demanded an interview, and got it scheduled. The personnel representative from the company told me she felt that he was going to take action against the company and file a discrimination complaint. She was pretty close to right, because I think he would have. I go to great lengths to explain the law to handicapped students, to tell them what their rights are under the law, and to tell them different situations they might encounter in interviews or in letters of rejection they might get. I explain the steps involved in filing a complaint, and where to go for help. I can't actually do that for them, but I certainly can let them know what their rights are.

In any case, Wayne went out, interviewed with that company, and found out that the building was not accessible. He couldn't get into the place in his wheelchair. So we suggested to Wayne that he write a letter of rejection to the employer, explaining that until they got the building shaped up he could not consider them at this time as an employer. Eventually, through an employment service representative, he came up with a job with the State of Minnesota. He was accepted on a six month Governor's Internship Program. He has completed the internship now and has been put on permanently, at about \$1100 a month. ”

Josephine Reed-Taylor,
Coordinator of Special Needs:

As Coordinator Josephine Reed-Taylor explains, SERVE goes to considerable lengths to narrow the gap between employer and disabled job applicant. She recently invited area employers to a symposium on placement of special needs students. "Instead of them telling

us what they wanted," she recalls, "they asked what they could do to be more responsive to what the handicapped applicant has to offer."

"Individualized programs are important for students who want special skills. We can take a total program, make a partial program out of it, and offer partial certificates. That is especially attractive to certain handicapped students who may not be able to complete a total program but can master a certain part of it. Later, they can go to an employer and say, "Hey, I know how to do this, this, and this."

We will intervene with employers and explain how "partials" work. Students will be applying for jobs that require those special kinds of tasks that they have learned. We wouldn't send a student for an auto-mechanics job if he can only fix mufflers, for example. We supply competency-based transcripts to the employers, so that they know specifically what the student has been trained in.

We recently hosted a symposium on job seeking and keeping skills. We had people from personnel departments, in private industry, and in state and federal government departments. The business people express the belief that they haven't really been aware of the kinds of training that certain students are getting. So, immediately, when they see a handicapped person, they think of things the person isn't capable of doing, as opposed to what that person is capable of doing. They now believe that they need to reorient themselves and get some in-service training on how to deal with, and how to look for, the positive aspects."

Florida Junior College

Jacksonville, Florida

Central to Job Developer Jan Stewart's approach to employment counseling at Florida Junior College is allowing students the freedom to face failure.

Jan Stewart, Job Developer:

"If the handicapped student has the ability to get through the training program here, he is going to be able to handle a job in that field. For a job interview, he needs to be coached in the way he responds to questions about his disability and show to the employer that he can accomplish the required tasks. If the employer believes that the student knows what he is talking about, and knows himself, then he may give him the chance...If you can't talk a student out of a program that may be too difficult, if you point out all the problem areas, and he still insists on trying it out, then I think the student ought to be allowed to make the attempt. If he fails, then he knows that he failed it by himself, and not because someone was protecting him."

Santa Ana College

Santa Ana, California

At Santa Ana College, placement is a multifaceted process that recognizes private industry's awakening to the mandates of Equal Opportunity. Part-time job opportunities off and on campus for credit, career days, and interviewing workshops for disabled students have all contributed to close contact between the college and community employers.

Bill Wenrich, President:

"We operate a substantial placement center for all out graduate students. We try to place them for work experience while they are still students here. We have cooperative education, where private companies employ students on a 10- to 20-hour-per-week basis. Students and employers work on common objective formation and on experiential goals. We, in turn, give credit for the work when the student writes a paper."

Our placement office spends a lot of time getting handicapped students into cooperative education programs. Frequently, this leads to long-term jobs. My gut reaction is that employers are generally aware of where the federal government stands and are awakening to the need to respond. If we can supply qualified employees to the private sector, they're going to respond.

Joe Diaz, Placement Director:

“ My work here involves several jobs: to go into town to talk to employers; to set up career days; to arrange for on-campus interviews; to counsel students; to put on interviewing workshops; and to get groups of disabled students together to discuss the frustration of going through an interview when they are in a wheelchair or have any other kind of obvious disability.

Placement for the disabled is critical. Just saying you have a placement office implies a service for people who are confident, feel good about themselves, who have both arms and both legs, a well-tuned body and who are raring to go. They will always walk into your office, but disabled students won't. You have to create an atmosphere that brings them in. You can start with a small student-help program. They'll say, "Hey, that's not a bad place. I can put in work on campus for 10 or 20 hours a week." They'll say to their friends, "Hey, I was talking to Joe the other day and he gave me a job on campus."

Regardless of what people say about education, students do not come to school just to be educated. They come to school to go to work. You can have the brightest person in the world, but if he has no place to go to work, then what have you got?

Employers hire for a whole lot of other reasons besides the fact that you qualify for the job. That's the hardest thing to teach a student or person in an interview. We tend to hire people like ourselves. If you are an applicant facing a recruiter who is standing straight up, and you are sitting in a wheelchair, you're going to have to outshine that person.

I want to spend some time with students and say, "Hey, you've got the qualifications, but if you go out dressed the way you're dressed, forget it. If you go out with the attitude that you've got, forget it. They don't owe you that job. You have to go out and show them that you are the one who should be hired, because you're the best one for that company."

I want to do some research to find out which companies actively recruit disabled students. I have heard companies on the phone say, "I want you to share this with the disabled center and get me some applicants to look at." I think we need to do that. As placement people, we need to go out and say, "Well, if I can get you two or three disabled students who are interested in this field, we can set up an appointment and go from there."

I will tell disabled students, "The moment you start thinking you are different, you're going to be treated differently. Now I know you have this disability, but it doesn't prevent you from doing these kinds of things. Don't start an interview by saying, 'I don't see well, I don't hear well, I don't this or I don't that.'" You have to have a positive approach.

Disabled students I have talked to seem to limit what they can do. One who comes to mind is a person who was interested in drafting, but who said he did not think he could do it. He was in a wheelchair. I told him, "It's just as easy to make a drafting table this high as it is to make it this high. You have the skills to draft. You show your portfolio. Believe me, the employer is only interested in getting the product out, and he needs the best people to do the job. If you are the best person for the job, he is going to hire you regardless of whether he has to have a table this high or a table that high." With all the regulations, companies have to make an attempt to service people who have disabilities. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. ”

Looking Ahead

Because there are no provisions for federal funding with Section 504, postsecondary institutions must rely on other federal programs and on state resources to come into compliance with the law: removing barriers, buying special equipment, hiring staff, and providing handicapped students with other necessary support services.

Administrators and trustees generally agree that money problems should not paralyze the application of creative planning and ingenuity, that physical plant improvements and support services may not be as expensive as they first appear. For instance, the complete overhaul of a multi-storey urban campus, to make it fully accessible, looks to be beyond the means of many postsecondary institutions. But with appropriate planning, necessary changes can be made in small, painless doses. Classes can be relocated. Work surfaces can be lowered, and equipment can be modified as part of routine adaptation, replacement or renewal.

Some money will be required, of course, to finance certain parts of a mainstreaming program, as in the hiring of interpreters for the deaf. Trustees and administrators would do well to stay fully informed about federal and state money available for relevant purposes. When the funding is there, the college should know about it.

Obviously, no single plan of attack will suit all postsecondary institutions seeking to implement a mainstreaming program. Yet those who have worked in developing programs on their own campuses have acquired planning and management expertise that can be useful by example.

In this chapter, some practical approaches are presented for costing out present programs, and planning for the future.

Springfield Technical Community College

Springfield, Massachusetts

Dorothy Pryor, Former Coordinator:

“ Providing for accessibility involves expense, but there are two things that you will discover about expenses.

The first is that a little bit of ingenuity sometimes goes a long way. Patience and flexibility count, too. If you haven't got the money to build a ramp, you can probably move the class to a room that is accessible. Costly construction is not the only way to solve problems; it may not even be the best way.

Secondly, we've discovered that the construction of ramps, electric doors, and those kinds of things have helped not only those who are permanently disabled, but also other people: mothers with children, somebody with an extra heavy load of books, or someone who is temporarily disabled (from a sprained ankle, or just plain weariness). On larger campuses, where you have a number of single parents who bring young children with them, ramps are a boon when you are dealing with a stroller, baby carriage, or whatever. They're also a big help to older faculty members who should not be trotting up and down stairs.

Nobody should have the gall to call such things frills. ”

Santa Ana College

Santa Ana, California

Bill Wenrich, President:

“ The question you have to ask is, how many dollars are you going to spend to provide accessibility? To what extent are you going to change the institution to respond to the needs of handicapped people? This is a fine line decision. How far do you go? What is cost effective? How much do you modify your shop

to allow a handicapped person to work and at what cost to you? Most people are philosophically in tune with, "Hey, anybody can do a job. Just because he has some limitation in one aspect of his life, that doesn't matter. Most of us have limitations in one aspect or another of our lives. His is different from mine, that's all." The problem is, if his is going to be a lot more costly to me as an employer, I'm going to have to make the cost-effective decision. The overall goal is to mainstream handicapped people into every possible accessible program. But there are some areas where we have to look pretty hard. For example, with machine tools like lathes, drill presses, milling machines, and all that, I'm not sure you can make all those accessible to somebody in a wheelchair. It would be awfully tough. To redesign bit pieces of machinery in order to make them accessible to somebody could be a little difficult...

Our problem, frankly, in the area of the handicapped is not one of awareness. In fact, we have waiting lists for most of our programs. Our real problem is how many dollars we can afford to pull from the total budget to serve this program. Our total handicapped program this year will cost about \$430,000 for extra services. That does not include the courses. That's a substantial amount of money for one college. The figure translates into \$900 per student above the average cost. Our cost for a full-time equivalent student is about \$1600 or \$1700. Take that cost, add \$900 more, and you have a fairly sizeable increase.

The public sector is facing a loss of credibility in terms of what people are now willing to pay for. Proposition 13 was an illustration of that here in California. Fortunately, I think community colleges have a lot of public support; that is one nice thing here. But given a less than optimal level of financing, you have to set priorities. What you do, it seems to me, is to do things incrementally. "

John West,
Dean of Special Services:

" I think flexibility in a program is a necessary part of services which we offer. If we can't have flexibility, then we really are in not much better shape than most four-year colleges and institutions, which will readily tell you that they don't have time for that kind of thing. We like to feel that that is what we're here for. We're not always going to be in money-making ventures every time we go out. But certainly if we don't make money, we want to see some results. And that is what we get--results. That has been the extent of our gratification. We are willing to do things which are sometimes not the most cost-effective. Although in areas where we can be, we do try to be cost-effective, and we try hard to generate funds to support ourselves during times when everyone else is groping about for the meager resources that are available. We have shown that we are doing well with what we have, but we have to show what we are bringing in. We recently had a program audit to determine how much money we generate directly from those in the classroom and in mainstreaming activities.

It is generally not going to cost what they think it is going to cost. And there's no telling how many benefits will accrue to a district down the line because of these programs. We just haven't been in business long enough.

But some people don't recognize these things. Some people feel that the money going for these purposes could be better used to have more classes in English, and History, and so forth. "This is no place to do this kind of thing. This isn't traditionally what goes on at a college." We have all of that kind of opposition, even with some administrators. But that is just the nature of the beast; it goes with the territory. You are forever finding yourself having to justify the things that you do.

But we have won over a few people. We've been around long enough to see that. Some of our worst adversaries at one point are now our most supportive.

Boards tend to see programs of this kind in rather concrete terms. Either you are going to lose some money, or you will have the opportunity to make some money. In our negotiating sessions, trying to get support on campus, we now know that this is the direction we must come from: how little it will cost the district, or how much the district can actually earn. There are a lot of people who will eat that up.

Before 1977, nobody really cared much about where handicapped people were or what happened to them. I toured several high schools in our area to determine what happened to students once they had been provided with high school services. No one had anything to say about matriculation. Everyone was kind of upset that their students, with whom they'd been working for three or four years, now had no place to go but home. But things are changing, finally, with the new legislation. ”

Gavilan Community College

Gilroy, California

Although federal and state laws offer expanded educational opportunities for handicapped people, government funding sources are not necessarily in step with the legislation. Administrators and trustees of developing mainstreaming programs can consider themselves, in this situation, the most effective advocates for increased appropriations. Lobbying, especially at the state level, can bring results.

The remarks that follow explore some of the questions of undertaking a lobbying effort. Where trustees and administrators don't have the time to act unilaterally, interested groups can form a lobbying coalition. In any event, legislators are most likely to be favorably impressed by those who are involved at the grass-roots level of mainstreaming the handicapped.

Carol Ghilarducci,

Coordinator/Enabler:

“ I've been involved in lobbying for the developmentally disabled and their right to attend colleges. I've gone to the Governor's meeting and said my spiel to them, to the Department of Rehab, and so forth. I've had legislators come to visit the campus when I thought we were going to be in hot water with funding. But that is about as much as I really want to do. My first year here I spent more time away than I did on campus. It wasn't fair to the staff, because it was a developing program. I thought at the time that it was more important to be aware of the laws, to be aware of the right people, to know whom to contact if you are in trouble. Know your community. Feel comfortable that somebody in Washington cares what is going on. ”

Rocky Lydon, Trustee:

“ My attention was drawn to this program because of Carol's coming to Gavilan. Carol is an outstanding person--exceptional in her devotion to the developmentally disabled. She told us of the availability of grants and state funds that could be obtained if we became involved in the program. She also pointed out to us that we didn't have to be overly concerned at the moment about financing

With any new program, there has to be some salesmanship. We have to be convinced that, if we have a limited amount of money, one program should be dropped in favor of a new one that's more deserving. I was very much concerned at the time about the changes in financing from the state. What are we going to do with the money we have? The state tells us we can't build this building. We need a building for vocational education; we set local funds aside; and then they tell us we can't spend that money, that we've got too many rooms here, or something. With Carol's program, we saw that there was really a small number of people involved, let's say 100 out of 2800. She worked hard to sell us the program--and to sell it to the community--and convinced us that we should go ahead with it.

It's hard for people to change--they need to be sold. Without Carol, the program would never have moved as fast as it did.

I think it helps to have a board member who is familiar with legislation, lobbying, and how the state works. But it's not always practical. Our present system calls for trustees to be elected from their community, which results in a good cross section: farmers, lawyers, housewives, all different kinds of people. All of their input is important, because they raise issues that reflect local problems. As important as lobbying is, it's difficult for trustees to jump in their cars and go several hundred miles to lobby. Of course, we do have the School Board of Trustees, the one organization that we belong to, which keeps us well informed about all the legislation. There are over 3000 bills that go into the California legislature every year, and about 25% of them have something to do with education. This requires that you be able to connect with a staff of knowledgeable people, because over a period of a week you wouldn't be able even to read all these bills, let alone understand them.

This board--a typical board--really isn't capable of that kind of work. Board members represent the community and will focus on community issues and needs. That's why we count on having access to other information sources, the same way we rely on Carol to inform us of her program's needs. ”

Miami Dade Community College

(North Campus), Miami, Florida

Wayne Silver,

Associate Dean

for Learning Support Services:

“ The struggle for resources can be difficult. This is generally true of higher education: rapidly increasing demands and shrinking resources. The struggle to mobilize resources and to increase resources--to try to extend

your resources through grants and special allocations from the legislature--certainly takes a large part of your time and energy. ”

Dr. Nicholas Gennet, Dean of Student
Development and Learning Services:

“ We have had to go everywhere for support. We have been able to scrounge up resources to help us meet the needs that have been enunciated by Section 504, needs that we were taking seriously before 504 came down the road. But we have all faced these questions of what happens when you slip into the trap of depending on soft money. If I were giving advice to institutions which did not have much state support, I'd urge them to become active politically and shake loose the money. You can sit around and hypothesize, but the bottom line is that you have to get the funds to do the work. If you don't get it from the federal government, you've got to get it from the state. ”

Duane Hausen, Vice President, North Campus:

“ There are some things you can do that are not very expensive--things that regular support services will take care of. You have to work on some attitudes. You have to be able to get in and out of buildings. You have to have rest rooms. But, you don't have any great expense in that regard.

The least of our financial problems was getting support for changing the facility. Our main problem has been raising money for ongoing operational expenses like getting interpreters for the deaf. These are more difficult for us than capital outlays. The state has funded us very well--in terms of our facilities. It has been easier to get grants for equipment than it has been for operational expenses. We have been able to get money for things more easily than for people. ”

Afterword

As Miami-Dade trustee Maria Hernandez said in chapter 1, "it is very elegant to have a moral commitment...(but) it is not practical to have only a moral commitment. We have to be realistic." The challenge to any postsecondary institution on the threshold of developing a mainstreaming program is to accept this difference and take on the task of being "realistic."

While this book has offered a mixture of personal anecdote with practical wisdom, trustees and administrators will find it helpful to turn to other literature for expanded "nuts and bolts" models and advice. The annotated bibliography that follows provides that kind of information.

Bibliography

Biehl, G.R., **Guide to the Section 504 Self-Evaluation for Colleges and Universities.** Washington, D.C.: National Association of College and University Business Offices, 1978.

This source includes suggestions for self-evaluation in considering compliance with the spirit and letter of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It discusses program accessibility, student programs, activities and services, and employment. Although it is written for college and university programs, any postsecondary institution will find it informative.

California State Department of Education, the California Community Colleges, and the University of California at Los Angeles Extension. **Five H: Formula for Improving Vocational Education for the Handicapped.** Los Angeles, Cal.: 1978-1979. (Contact: Richard S. Nelson, Administrator, Vocational and Career Education Services Section, California State Department of Education).

These materials (in a three-ring binder) were developed as a resource guide for people in inservice training programs. They are designed to advance the understanding and capabilities of vocational educators at both secondary and post-secondary levels. Career development for handicapped persons is an area of focus in this excellent working/planning document.

Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Va. 22091. **Vocational Education: Teaching the Handicapped in Regular Classes.** Arlington, Va.: Edited by Robert Weisberger, 1978.

Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Va. 22091. **Vocational Education for Handicapped Students: A Guide for Policy Development.** Arlington, Va.: developed by Sharon Davis and Michael Ward, 1978.

These publications provide practical suggestions for helping teachers and administrators comply with legislation. They include information about federal program support, the concept of the "least restrictive environment," and the development of individualized instruction.

National Center for Educational Statistics. **The Impact of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 on American Colleges and Universities—Final Report.** Washington, D.C.

Discussion centers on estimating costs to colleges and universities of conforming to the program accessibility requirements of Section 504. This guide also examines the relationship between physical plant accessibility and program accessibility.

"Programs for the Handicapped." Washington, D.C.: Office for Handicapped Individuals, 338 D Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Ave., SW, 20201.

This bimonthly periodical, published by DHEW, presents current information regarding sources available to meet the needs of handicapped people, and is a good ongoing reference for administrators, staff, and students.

Redden, M.R., Levering, C., and DiQuinzio, D. **Recruitment, Admissions, and Handicapped Students: A Guide for Compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** D.C.: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers and the American Council on Education, 1978.

This guide is written expressly for administrators of postsecondary institutions which seek to comply with Section 504. It presents "imperatives" that should be followed without modification and "suggestions" for voluntary activities. It also provides model admissions policy for handicapped students.

*Note: The half-hour film, **Taking on Tomorrow**, is available from the National Audiovisual Center in Washington, D.C. Directed toward policymakers in post-secondary institutions, it shows some approaches used by one institution to develop programs and services to meet vocational needs. The film is especially useful in conference settings. A guide to its use is included.*

Order from the National Audiovisual Center (General Services Administration), Attn: Order Section, Washington, D.C. 20409, or telephone (301) 763-1891. Film number A02631.